

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
for the
Eastern District of Michigan

United States of America

v.

Montez Thomas

Case: 2:23-mj-30197

Case No.

Assigned To : Unassigned

Assign. Date : 5/16/2023

SEALED MATTER (LH)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of September 2019 to November 2022 in the county of Wayne in the
Eastern District of Michigan, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Offense Description

18 U.S.C. § 922(a)(1)(A)

18 U.S.C. § 922 (a)(6)

Engaging in the business of dealing firearms without a license

False statement during the purchase of a firearm

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.



Complainant's signature

Steven Allick, Special Agent (ATF)

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence
and/or by reliable electronic means.

Date: May 16, 2023

City and state: Detroit, Michigan



Judge's signature

Hon. Anthony P. Patti, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I. INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

I, Steven Allick, being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

1. I am a Special Agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and have been since May of 2014. I am currently assigned to the Detroit Field Division. I completed 26 weeks of training, which was comprised of the Criminal Investigator Training Program and the ATF Special Agent Basic Training program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia. I received extensive training on firearms identification, common scenarios involving firearms and narcotics trafficking, and identification and effects of controlled substances. Additionally, I received training on undercover investigations related to firearms and narcotics trafficking, which included investigative techniques and common subject behavior.

2. During my employment with ATF, I have participated in numerous investigations of criminal violations relating to firearms, violent crime, and narcotics. I have participated in various aspects of criminal investigations, including interviews, physical surveillance, and obtaining and executing search warrants. I am familiar with and have employed various investigative methods, including electronic surveillance, visual surveillance, search warrants, and the utilization of confidential informants.

3. The facts in this affidavit come from my personal observations, interviews conducted by myself and/or other law enforcement agents, review of relevant police reports and information from others who have personal knowledge of the events and circumstances described herein, and my training and experience. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested warrant and does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter.

4. Based on my training and experience and the facts set forth in this affidavit, there is probable cause to believe that Montez THOMAS (DOB: XX/XX/1997), has violated 18 U.S.C. § 922(a)(1)(A) (engaging in business of dealing in firearms without a license) and 18 U.S.C. § 922(a)(6) (false statement during purchase of a firearm) also referred to as a “straw purchase”.

II. PROBABLE CAUSE

5. In January 2023, I reviewed 10 ATF Firearms Trace Summary Reports relating to Montez THOMAS. The ATF Firearms Trace Summary Report is a report that is generated to document the purchaser of the firearm and the individual who was found to be in possession of the purchased firearm. Below is a summary of the 10 traces:

6. On September 13, 2019, THOMAS purchased a Taurus, model PT740 Slim, .40 caliber pistol, serial number SJX68084 from Action Impact, a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) in Southfield, MI. 745 days later, on September 27, 2021, Detroit Police Department recovered the Taurus pistol.

7. On October 19, 2019, THOMAS purchased a Taurus, model G2s, 9mm pistol, serial number TLW87133 from Action Impact, an FFL in Southfield, MI. On June 5, 2021, Detroit Police Department recovered the Taurus pistol from a person identified as Q.T.A. (DOB: xx/xx/1999). DPD officers observed what appeared to be a firearm in Q.T.A.'s front left pocket, DPD officers asked Q.T.A. if he had a concealed pistol license (CPL). Q.T.A. said, "No". DPD officers recovered the Taurus from Q.T.A.'s left pocket. Q.T.A. was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon without a valid CPL. The firearm was originally purchased by THOMAS 595 days prior to the incident.

8. On June 1, 2020, THOMAS purchased a Glock, model 29, 10mm pistol, serial number BNNU176 from Michi-Gun & Tackle Co., an FFL in Saint Clair Shores, MI. On July 23, 2020, Detroit Police Department officers observed a group of individuals standing in the street in the area of Belvidere Street and Graves Street in Detroit, MI 48214. While approaching the group, officers observed the suspect, later identified as T.L.W. (DOB: xx/xx/1999), walking away from the group to a car parked in the area and DPD officers detained T.L.W. after he tried to run. A DPD officer checked the area of the vehicle where T.L.W was ducking, the officer located two (2) firearms behind the front passenger wheel. T.L.W. was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon offense. One of the firearms was identified as a Glock, Model 29, 10mm caliber pistol bearing serial number, BNNU176. T.L.W was prohibited from purchasing and possessing firearms due to a felony conviction. I know

individuals who cannot legally purchase firearms from federal firearms licensees, will often ask individuals with a clean background to purchase firearms on their behalf. The firearm was originally purchased by THOMAS 52 days prior to the incident.

9. On July 23, 2020, THOMAS purchased a Glock, model 22, .40 caliber pistol, serial number AERB727 from CC Coins, an FFL in Dearborn Heights, MI. On October 8, 2020, Detroit Police Department recovered the Glock pistol from a person identified as J.A. (DOB: xx/xx/1996). Officers were in the area when they observed a black Jeep parked on Seneca across from 4184 Seneca. Officers identified another person, T.J., in the front driver seat of the vehicle and J.A. in the front passenger seat of the vehicle. Officers detected the smell of burnt marijuana, as they approached the black Jeep, officers observed J.A. lean to the right toward the door and his right shoulder dip then sat back up. As officers approached the Jeep, they observed a black handgun on the floorboard in front of J.A. Officers took J.A. into custody; J.A. was prohibited from purchasing and possessing firearms due to a felony conviction. I know individuals who cannot legally purchase firearms from federal firearms licensees, will often ask individuals with a clean background to purchase firearms on their behalf. The firearm was purchased 77 days prior by THOMAS.

10. On June 7, 2021, THOMAS purchased a F.N., model Five-Seven, 5.7 caliber pistol, serial number 386406848 from Recoil Firearms, an FFL in Taylor,

MI. On August 21, 2022, Detroit Police Department recovered the firearm from a person who was not THOMAS. On August 21, 2022, DPD officers contacted the driver of a vehicle which was observed travelling at a high rate of speed. The DPD officers contacted the driver, identified as A.N. (DOB: xx/xx/1988). While approaching the vehicle, officers observed A.N. standing near the passenger side of the vehicle. DPD officers searched the area where A.N. was standing and recovered a FN Herstal, Model Five-Seven, 5.7X28 mm FN caliber pistol bearing serial number, 386406848. A.N. was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon violation. The person who possessed the firearm was prohibited from purchasing and possessing firearms due to a felony conviction. I know individuals who cannot legally purchase firearms from federal firearms licensees, will often ask individuals with a clean background to purchase firearms on their behalf. This firearm was purchased 440 days prior by THOMAS.

11. On May 28, 2021, THOMAS purchased a Glock, model 23, .40 caliber pistol, serial number BTEV647 from CC Coins, an FFL in Dearborn Heights, MI. The Glock was recovered by the Detroit Police Department on a person who was not THOMAS. On July 6, 2021, DPD officers conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle in the area of 717 Ferdinand St. in Detroit, MI 48209. DPD officers recovered the Glock, Model 23, .40 S&W caliber pistol bearing serial number, BTEV647. The suspect, identified as D.D.S. (DOB: xx/xx/2002), was arrested for a carrying a

concealed weapon in the vehicle without a CPL. This firearm was purchased 39 days prior by THOMAS.

12. On October 28, 2021, THOMAS purchased a Romar/Cugir, model Micro Draco, 7.62 caliber pistol, serial number 21PMD-25825 from Top Gun Shooting Sports, an FFL in Taylor, MI. On April 16, 2022, Michigan State Police (MSP) Troopers conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle with no license plate. Troopers identified the driver as J.J.B. (DOB: xx/xx/2002) and determined the vehicle had no valid insurance. J.J.B was arrested for operating a vehicle with no insurance. During a subsequent search of the vehicle, Troopers located the Romarm/Cugir, Model Micro Draco, 7.62X39 mm caliber pistol bearing serial number, 21PMD-25825. This firearm was purchased 170 days prior by THOMAS.

13. On January 6, 2022, THOMAS purchased a Glock, model 33, .357 caliber pistol, serial number BVAY697 from Point Blank Firearms, an FFL in Dearborn Heights, MI. On May 11, 2022, DPD officers initiated a foot pursuit after watching a group of males run from their police car. A black male, identified as A.A.R. (DOB: xx/xx/1997), was apprehended after a foot chase. DPD officers observed three black males holding their waistbands while running into a house at 17261 Sunderland Street in Detroit, MI 48219. DPD officers were able to locate a second black male, identified as J.J.K (DOB: xx/xx/1999), coming from an alley. The alley was searched by a DPD officer who recovered a Glock, Model 33, .357 Magnum caliber

pistol bearing serial number, BVAY697. DPD officers also recovered two stolen vehicles. This firearm was purchased 126 days prior by THOMAS.

14. On January 13, 2022, THOMAS purchased a Glock, model 29, 10mm pistol, serial number BVYD386 from The Firing Line, an FFL in Westland, MI. On February 6, 2022, DPD officers contacted the occupants of an improperly plated vehicle in a gas station parking lot. A DPD officer observed a firearm in the driver's right pocket, later identified as D.K. (DOB: xx/xx/1999). The front seat passenger of the vehicle fled on foot leaving behind a firearm on the passenger seat. DPD officers also identified a back seat passenger, as W.D.K. (DOB: xx/xx/2000) and was arrested for a felony robbery warrant. D.K. was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon without a valid CPL. Two firearms were recovered by DPD officers. The firearm left of the passenger seat was identified as a Glock, Model 29, 10 mm caliber pistol bearing serial number, BVYD386. The firearm was purchased 24 days prior by THOMAS.

15. June 23, 2022, THOMAS purchased a Glock, model 30, .45 caliber pistol, serial number BWTX022 from Uncoiled Firearms, an FFL in Livonia, MI. On June 24, 2022, DPD officers were in the area of Stahelin Ave. and Pembroke Ave. in Detroit, MI 48219. DPD officers observed the suspect, later identified as W.D.K. (DOB: xx/xx/2000) standing near a vehicle. DPD officers noticed what appeared to be a firearm in the front right pocket of W.D.K pants. When W.D.K. saw the patrol vehicle, he removed the firearm from his pocket and attempted to place it in a vehicle

he was standing by. The DPD officers contacted W.D.K. and noticed a second firearm in his left pocket. Officers placed W.D.K. in handcuffs and observed the first firearm on the ground near the open door of the vehicle. A third firearm was recovered from the waistband of a second suspect, identified as K.L.S. K.L.S. and W.D.K. were both arrested for carrying concealed weapons without a valid CPL. One of the firearms W.D.K. possessed was identified as a Glock, Model 30, .45 ACP caliber pistol bearing serial number, BWTX022. W.D.K. was prohibited from purchasing and possessing firearms due to a felony conviction. I know individuals who cannot legally purchase firearms from federal firearms licensees, will often ask individuals with a clean background to purchase firearms on their behalf. This firearm was purchased one (1) day prior by THOMAS.

16. In January 2023, I reviewed ATF Forms 4473 relating to firearms purchased by THOMAS from various FFLs. An ATF Form 4473 documents an individual's purchase of firearms from a Federal Firearms Licensee. THOMAS has purchased at least 14 handguns from various FFLs and only registered five (5) of the handguns with the State of Michigan, as required by state law. Of the five (5) firearms registered with the State of Michigan, four (4) of the firearms have been recovered during various crimes on people that are not THOMAS. The fact THOMAS was able to properly register five (5) of his firearms, demonstrated his awareness of the requirement and his ability to comply with it.

17. In addition to the above mentioned 10 traces, THOMAS most recently purchased two (2) firearms from Point Blank Firearms, an FFL in Dearborn Heights on November 3, 2022. The firearms are further described as follows:

- a. Canik, model Mete SFT, 9mm pistol, serial number 21CC22794.
- b. Glock, model 27, .40 caliber pistol, serial number AGVB207.

18. On January 17, 2023, I queried the Federal Licensing System, and determined THOMAS does not have a federal firearms license nor did THOMAS ever have a federal firearms license, which would permit THOMAS to repetitively buy and sell firearms.

19. On February 14, 2023, Judge Elizabeth A. Stafford of the United States District Court in the Eastern District of Michigan reviewed and signed a federal search warrant, 2:23-mc-50101-3, for 24201 Elmira Street, Redford, MI, the residence of THOMAS.

20. On February 17, 2023, the federal search warrant was executed at the residence of THOMAS and THOMAS was physically present within the location. During the search, zero (0) firearms purchased by THOMAS were located inside the residence. There were 17 different State of Michigan Pistol Sales records located within the SUBJECT PREMISES with THOMAS' name on them, for firearms THOMAS has purchased. In addition, five (5) empty firearms boxes were located inside the residence.

21. Following the search, agents interviewed THOMAS and he agreed to a post Miranda interview. THOMAS admitted to purchasing the firearms for an unknown individual that THOMAS knows as "Jamal". THOMAS stated he would be compensated anywhere from \$500-\$700 per gun that he would purchase. In addition, THOMAS stated he would communicate with "Jamal" via an application TextNow on his cell phone. THOMAS stated he would only communicate with "Jamal" when "Jamal" wanted THOMAS to purchase firearms and "Jamal" would reach out to THOMAS. THOMAS stated the area code for "Jamal's" TextNow account was from Milwaukee, 414. THOMAS stated he believes he first started purchasing firearms for "Jamal" around "covid" times, 2020. THOMAS stated his relationship with "Jamal" was strictly business.

22. As indicated above, the purchaser of a firearm must fill out a federal form entitled "Firearms Transaction Record," or ATF Form 4473. On every Form 4473, question 21.a. asks whether the individual filling out the form is the "actual transferee/buyer," and warns that "You are not the actual transferee/buyer if you are acquiring the firearm(s) on behalf of another person." Under federal law, with a few exceptions, (i.e., gifts) the purchaser is not allowed to purchase a firearm for someone else. This is called a "straw purchase," and violates 18 U.S.C. § 922(a)(6), which prohibits making a false statement during the purchase of a firearm.

23. I have nine (9) of the ATF Forms 4473 completed by M. THOMAS from various FFLs and M. THOMAS indicated that he was the "actual transferee/buyer" of the firearm.

24. Another section of the ATF Form, located directly above the purchaser the signature line, informs the purchaser of specific federal violations that pertain to firearm purchases. This section also asks about truthfulness on the earlier questions on the form. It states, "I further understand that the repetitive purchase of firearms for the purpose of resale for livelihood and profit without a federal firearms license is a violation of Federal law." The instructions state the federal statute 18 U.S.C. § 922 (a)(1)(A), which makes it unlawful for a person to deal in firearms without a license. A person is engaged in the business of dealing in firearms if he/she devotes time, attention, and labor to dealing in firearms as a regular course of trade or business with the principal objective of livelihood and profit through the repetitive purchase and resale of firearms.


25. As was documented above, THOMAS has purchased multiple handguns—many of similar or identical make and model. Based on my training and experience, and interaction with the firearms trade, none of the firearms purchased by THOMAS have any collector's value. In fact, many of the firearms that THOMAS purchased are inexpensive and among the most commonly recovered crime guns in the Detroit area. I know, based on my training, experience and past firearms trafficking investigations, that individuals who purchase multiples of inexpensive handguns,

particularly in a short period of time, are often illegal firearms dealers. I know from my training and experience, having traced numerous firearms, and my interaction with firearms and the firearms industry that a majority of firearms purchased by THOMAS fit into this illegal trafficking category.

III. CONCLUSION

Based on this information, there is probable cause to believe from September 2019 through November 2022, THOMAS has violated 18 U.S.C. § 922(a)(1)(A) (engaging in business of dealing in firearms without a license) and 18 U.S.C. § 922(a)(6) (false statement during purchase of a firearm) also referred to as a “straw purchase. These violations occurred in the Eastern District of Michigan.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven Allick
ATF Special Agent

Sworn to before me and signed in my
presence and/or by reliable electronic means.



HON. ANTHONY P. PATTI
United States Magistrate Judge

Dated: May 16, 2023